



## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### INFORMATION SERVICE

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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#### IMPORTANT LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS NOTED IN FWS ANNUAL REPORT

Four pieces of major legislation affecting the work of the Fish and Wildlife Service were passed during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1959, according to the annual report of the Department of the Interior, released today by Secretary Fred A. Seaton.

As a result of the Alaska Statehood Act and the Alaska Omnibus Act the way was cleared for Alaska to assume management of its commercial fishery resources and its sport fisheries and wildlife on January 1, 1960, a development of importance to the Service and its component Bureaus--the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries.

Another law of importance to both units was that providing for the research on the effects of the use of pesticide chemicals upon the fish and wildlife resources of the Nation.

A third piece of legislation which will facilitate the work of each of the bureaus is the amended Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act. This amended statute declares a public policy guaranteeing that fish and wildlife resources are given equal consideration with other features of water-resource development programs. This includes estuarial as well as inland waters.

The fourth is the \$3 duck stamp law which adds one dollar to the price of the duck stamp, provides that effective July 1, 1960, all receipts except the cost of printing and distributing shall be used in the selection and acquisition of migratory bird refuges under provisions of the Migratory Bird Conservation Act.

An important piece of legislation introduced but not passed during the fiscal year would provide for the creation of the Arctic Wildlife Range, a nine-million-acre wonderland in northeastern Alaska.

During the year there was a marked interest in the field of oceanography and an indication that numerous agencies, including the Bureau of Commercial Fisheries, working together to effect long-range plans in this field of research so vital to the Nation's safety and economics.

The annual report also points out increased activity in the international aspects of commercial fishing. It shows that its program for gathering foreign fishery information was being expanded; that both Russia and Japan had large fishing fleets in Bering Sea, shrimp beds were discovered off the northern shores of South America.

The reports also indicate that the drought in the prairies of northern United States and southern Canada is giving increased impetus to the concept of continental management of the migratory waterfowl resource. It cites the greatest winter waterfowl survey ever made covered the wintering grounds in Canada, the United States, Mexico and several West Indian islands.

The report notes also an increasing demand for recreational use of the National Wildlife Refuges and an increase in the popularity of marine sport fishing.

A survey of the Columbia River development program made during the year shows that up to the present time 1200 miles of streams have been improved by the removal of barriers, 15 major fish ladders have been constructed, over 400 fish screens have been installed and 20 hatcheries have been rebuilt or newly constructed since the beginning of the program in 1949.

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